ber have been duly considered by the Government in consultation with the oil industry. The Government is of the view that effective implementation of the Committee's recommendations, wherever feasible and practical, will help provide better service to LPG consumers. Several of the recommendations are accordingly already under implementation;

(b) Oil Companies are marketing LPG in urban and semi-urban area besides rural areas contiguous to towns/cities. Further, with a view to protecting the country's forest resources, LPG facility is being extended to selected hilly/desert areas. Besides, progressive increase in the allocation of kerosene oil to states and Union Territories is being made to enable the fuel needs of the people, including those residing in or close to forests, to be met better;

(c) No estimate in this regard has been made by the Ministry of Environment and forests, which is the concerned administrative Ministry.

Inter-Ministerial group for Coal supplies to power plants

*471. SHRI D. B. CHANDRE GOWDA:

SHRI HAVENDRA SINGH HANSPAL:

Will the Minister of ENERGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have recently set up an inter-ministerial group to coordinate and ensure regular and adequate coal supplies to power plants in the country;

(b) if so, what is the composition of the group; and

(c) what is the estimated loss suffered by power plants due to non-supply of adequate coal during the last three years and what other steps Government propose to take to ensure coal supplies to power plants?

THE MINISTER OF ENERGY AND THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI VASANT SATHE): (a) to (c) Coal supply to power stations in the country is monitored by Central Government and priority is accorded to supply of coal to the power sector. A Standing Linkage Committee functions in the department of Coal with representatives of Department of Coal, Department of Power, Ministry of Railways, the Central Electricity Authority (CEA) and Coal Companies which decides linkages on quarterly basis. Supply of coal to power stations is monitored closely by Coal India Limited, Ministry of Railways and Departments of Coal and Power, and CEA in order to ensure that adequate supplies of coal are available with the power stations to maintain the level of generation required. By and large, the position in regard to supply of coal to power stations in the country has been satisfactory and thermal generation in three years from 1985-86 has exceeded the targets.

A special Inter-Ministerial Group was set up by the Department of Coal to co-ordinate and ensure adequate and regular coal supplies to thermal power stations in the country as a part of Action Plan to build adequate coal stocks with the power stations in view of the 6-day strike call by workers in coal industry from 15-3-1988.

The Group comprised representatives of Ministry of Railways, Departments of Coal and Power, Coal India Limited and the Central Electricity Authority.

Delay in implementation of Karnal and Mangalore refinery projects

*472. SHRI ASHWANI KUMAR: Will the Minister of PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that due to inordinate delay and inefficient implementation of Karnal and Mangalore refinery projects, the refinery capacity of 9 million tonnes, which was earlier expected to be realised by the end of the current plan period is now likely to be available only during the Eighth Plan period; and

(b) if so, what are the details in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI BRAHM DUTT): (a) and (b) Government had proposed during the VI Plan the setting up of two grass root refineries at Karnal and Mangalore. However, during the exercises made for provisions for these projects in the VIIth Plan, it was found that serious resource constraints were coming in the way of taking up these two projects in the public sector. It has therefore been decided to take up these in the joint sector, with suitable private parties.

2. The Karnal Refinery is expected to be commissioned in 1992-93. A detailed project report is being prepared for the Mangalore Refinery. Investment decision on this will be taken after the DPR is ready.

Explosion at industrial explosive manufacturing unit near Cochin

*473. SHRI MUKHTIAR SINGH MALIK:

SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY:

Will the Minister of INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item which appeared in thhe Hindustan Times dated the 6th March, 1988 wherein it has been stated that ten women were charred to death when a chemical they were handling at an industrial explosive manufacturing unit near Cochin accidentally exploded;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof; and

(c) whether any inquiry has since been conducted into the matter and what action has been taken by Government in regard thereto?

THE MINISTER OF INDUSTRY (SHRI J. VENGALRAO): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Ten women were killed in an explosion in a gunpowder/fire-works factory at Kadakoodam in Nadama Village near Thripunithura on 5-3-1988. The pounding and mixing shed of the factory was also raized to the ground.

(c) The accident is being investigated by the Controller of Explosives, Ernakulam under the supervision of the Deputy Chief Controller of Explosives, Madras. The licence granted to the factory for the manufacture of fireworks/gunpowder has been suspended by the Deputy Chief Controller of Explosives, Madras on 7-3-88. The Police have filed a case under the relevant provisions of law.